not expected him until later. He pushed his bag under the seat of a Weller livery rig, and, with young limmy Weller beside him to bring back the horse, started out along the His neighbors owned no such Friedensburg road.

It was a raw March day. A gray mist hung over the brown fields and sagged among the leafless trees in the woods. The cold drizzle changed to sleet and back to rain again. To a young man of the city, fresh from modern city conveniences and attractions, the ride was unexhilarating. Somehow, when they reached the cross-roads by the big red maple on the ridge and glimpsed the familiar farm lying below, half in the meadow and half on the adjoining hill, instead of home it seemed like thirty-six acres of loneliness. Except for the curl of smoke above the house of the low call from the without a lot of trouble and work, and It was a raw March day. A gray mist hung over the brown fields and thirty-six acres of loneliness. Except for the curl of smoke above the house chimney and the low call from the barn, the buildings might have been deserted. The rambling orchard was bare of leaf or fruit, the berry patch a succession of red rows of thorny bayonets, and the meadow desolate of marigold, water thrush or cropping cattle. His only satisfaction was that none of the boys from the office was along to see. They would not understand the life his parents led.

At the familiar picket gate he turned the horse about for young Jimmy, wished him a safe journey back, then hurried to the house, habit taking him to the kitchen door. Rust, the dog, was not in evidence—doubtless on one of his periodic collie experious. At the sound of the latch gare we going to do about it."

The dog wagged his it is once then man nature of your lord and master without a lot of trouble and work, and without a lot of trouble and work and was been going to do about it."

The dog wagged his it is once then are we going to do about it."

The dog wagged his it is once then.

"Righto!" declared the boy. "There's only one thing to do, and that is to do that one thing." Thoughtfully he started back toward the house. Rust stalked at his heels with collie dignity, his sable brush swaying slowly with his stride.

The next day Robert journeyed back to the Grainger Company to hand in his resignation. Mr. Jones, secretary of the concern, heard his decision with

the dog, was not in evidence—doubt—ins resignation. All Jodes, seemal less on one of his periodic collie ex— of the concern, heard his decision with cursions. At the sound of the latch simple states are sometimes of the concern, heard his decision with cursions. At the sound of the latch grave eyes.

Thank God, she was all right: a bit pinched and worried, pyrhaps, but up you agree to keep it confidential. Last week Mr. Grainger asked me to name.

matum like that?"
"Sh!" She held him convulsively as a mother does. "Your father didn't send the telegram, Robert."
He felt a sudden staggering about

the heart.
"Dad's-all right, mother?"
She shook her head. "He hasn't been out of his room since about three weeks on Tuesday."

mother, her voice choking. "He can tell you the name the doctor called it. The room must stay dark all the time.

Just think, Robbie! The doctor says
he might never look at sunlight again.
He sits there alone in the dark—so
patient, Robbie." She began to cry,

"Never made money!" exclaimed Bob blankly. "Why, how could he send me to college, mother?"

Bob swallowed painfully.

His mother bowed her head and went on: "When the squire wouldn't

give any more on the farm, he bor-rowed from George Good. He told George he hadn't any security but the stock and furniture, and they weren't worth \$1,200. But George said he'd Bob had grown white.

"Oh, Robbie." begged his mother.
"don't feel bad toward your father.
He didn't want you to grow up and
work hard all your life on a farm for
nothing, like him. Why, he's lived in
Neff township all his life, and he
hasn't been a school director or hasp't been a school director or a clerk at election. They never even asked him to be deacon in the church asked him to be deacon in the church or deal at the Farmers' Bank in Three Valleys. Oh. Robbie, he never said much to anybody—your father doesn't act that way, but he's always wanted to be somebody—so he could feel that he had done something in the world."

She finished piteously. The boy made no reply. For a few minutes he sat bewildered. Then he started up the rag-carpeted stairs. In the dim. sat bewildered. Then he started up the rag-carpeted stairs. In the dim, cold bedroom a spare form sat wrapped in a red-checkered blanket on a recking-chair near one of the drawn blinds. As Bob opened the door, the figure looked up patiently: "I was wondering, mother, when we might expect a letter from Bob?"

A guilty tremor shot through the boy as he remembered how little he as he remembered how little he written. "Hello, dad!" he swal-

The rocking-chair trembled. "Bob!-The almost imperceptible nudge from his mother was unneeded.
"If a fellow can't run home to see

folks once in a while!" exclaimed "I'm not very bad. Bob," said his father earnestly. "A lot better my eyes than my heart giving out. They don't hurt all the time, and then I can sleep; I'll be all right after a while. You musn't worry or lose time from your business, lad, on account of me. When had you counted an When had you counted on going back?"
"I'm not counting on going back.
dad." answered the boy. "If you and
mother will let me, I'm going to take
care of the farm."

mustn't take one day from your idea. Will you take it for a year of one demand, like your father?"

office."

"I've had to give up office work for "I'm 10"

Twenty-four or forty-eight hours."

For a few moments no one said any-thing. Bob felt his mother's workeaten hand slip silently into his.

Late in the afternoon, in felt boots and old clothes, he started on an inspection of the old place, the now returned and repentant Rust gallopng joyfully ahead, a vision of shag-gy, jolting feather and waving Sable blume. He visited the barn first. From around the depleted stack in

His heart dilated a little as he re-

His hart dilated a little as he remembered his father's pathetic efforts
membered his father's

His neighbors owned no such scruples. As a result they raised

week Mr. Grainger asked me to name our most promising young men so he could keep his eyes on them and help them along as they deserved it. You were one of the five. You've been doing good work here, and we apdoing good work here, and we ap-preciate it. Now when opportunity's just beginning to open up ahead of you, you want to throw up your chances to some one else. Can't you reconsider this a little?"

Bob shook his head dumbly. That

afternoon on his way back to the farm he dropped in to see Mr. George "It's his eyes again," went on his Good at his substantial brick house in Three Valleys. "I'm taking over the farm," he ex-

plained in a simple, straightforward manner. "I'm going to try to make it a success so dad can pay back the money he owes you without selling the stock. I've had some experience money he owes you without selling the stock. I've had some experience on the place before I went to school, stroking her. "Don't you worry one particle. I'll get the best kind of a doctor for dad. Maybe it won't take very long. Why in the world didn't you send for me before?"

"I wanted to. Robbie. but he made me promise not to. He was afraid you'd worry about the farm."

"I should say not," declared Bob. "Til just get Johnny Grimes or Ed Summerhill or somebody to come here and take care of it for you. Wages are high just now, but what's dad been making money all his life for if he can't take a rest when he needs it?"

money he owes you without selling the stock. I've had some experience on the place before I went to school, but I'm no farmer like dad. At the same titme I've got a training that I think is just as important in farming—I mean a business training."

Good looked frankly disapproving. So Bob went on to explain: "Most farmers can raise crops, but it takes either a business farmer or a lucky one to make money at it, and I'm gone to ma zically. He was a big man in heart the eggs you eat? Do

> "I THOUGHT your father had about everything out there a man needs o raise things."

"I don't need the money to raise "I don't need the money to raise products at the cost to produce qual-things," Bob answered quietly. ity, regardless of current market "Father can tell me how to do that. prices.

"You've got it exactly!" cried Bob.
"And do it willingly, because they know they're getting more value for box was loaded to the galvanized

"What if every farmer did it?"

"For one thing, the country might be a lot healthier. People would eat less and better food. There wouldn't be so much wasted in the fields and other places."

Good looked unconvinced. "All right, my how. If you want to spend a thou-

thereafter a definite form of evolution began overtaking the Murray farm. In might have been noticed. A telephone line had been run across the fields from the pike. The barn and outbuildings had been painted a clean white with green slats and trimmings. The house and outkitchen had received similar jackets. The lawn, vegetable garden and barnyard fences had been laboriously whitewashed, likewise every post of the wire fences enclosing fields, chicken yards and hog runways. And on the green roof of the barn in letters that could be read for a half mile had been painted "Quality Farm."

When it was finished Bob could not resist walking out to the big maple at though they could not begin to carry the overburdening loss in truck, berries and fruit. Quality Farm, as a whole, had merely managed through alive, with nothing to show for saltilizer and lime.

In the latter part of April he began planting lima and string beans, sweet corn, cucumbers and tomatoes. It was a triffe early, his father admitted, but it had been an unusually early spring. Fruit trees soon were a glory of loveliness. His father in his bedrevely the overburdening loss in truck, berries and fruit. Quality Farm, as a whole, had merely managed through alive, with nothing to show for salting or surplus interest on the extra investment.

"Looks like a sort of bleak where, mother," he gritted. "But we've got the cows and chickens to work with. If you're game to keep it from dad, we'll try to put off the payments on the machine, and scrape through till room wistfully pleaded that the window be raised each day so that he might have been noticed. A telephone



and body. There were people who said his pear-shaped organ ran away with the rest of him.

through barnyard and pigpen, or are they kept in sanitary quarters, where they kept in sanitary quarters, where they receive clean, nutritious feed?

"How about the vegetables, the fruit the rest of him."

What I need it for is to sell things at a profit that will keep me in business."

"A farmer spend money to sell his own crops?" ejaculated Good.

The boy nodded earnestly. "A farmer's got to look the facts in the face. He's a business man like any-"Its Jersey cows range contentedly

saler, in butter, eggs, and other farm tables Bob's father had never raised products. That afternoon he went to Pennver and ordered a light delivery plant. car of a certain well known and pop-ular-priced make. On each glinting side he directed that "Quality Farm" my boy. If you want to change the sand dollars trying to change the sand to take care of in monthly payments. The remainder he arranged to take care of in monthly payments. Early in April Bob worked the rich muck soil of the truck patches into velvet powder, and began planting demand, like your father?" beets, carrots, cabbage, lettuce, onions, radishes and turnips. Nightly he went to his father in the darkened

if he can't take a rest when he needs insurance. I'll sign one over to you to take care of you in case of my death."

This mother began to sob openly.

The mother be

and the pork you eat? How were they grown and cared for? What sort of hands touched them?

"Quality Farm has been established to give the discriminating people of Pennver a service of Quality Farm products at the cost to produce qual-

what, if anything, might be done. He awoke the next morning with the realization that he was shivering. He iumped hastily out to the rag car-

The boy nodded earnestly. "A farmer's got to look the facts in the face. He's a business man like anybody else. To make a success he's got to have more than quarters, machinery, stock and technical experience. He's got to have an idea to sell and the capital to put it over."

"That there word 'idea' don't sound good to me." said Good.
"I don't mean a pipe dream," explained the youth. "I mean a farmer's got to have a way of either raising to have a way of either raising to have a way of either raising things cheaper than most people or raising them better. And if it's the second way, he's got to have capital to let people find it out and pay him a raisonable profit. That's what I'm a raisonable profit. That's what I'm gagainst out there."

Good looked earnestly. "A drop of sunshine and dew. Its fruit is grown on healthy trees.
"All Quality Farm products are packed in handsome individual containers and delivered by the Quality Farm truck, whose calling at your door means added distinction to your household.

"Only a limited number of patrons can be accepted—the first few. Please return the card today." "Yours very truly," "ROBERT MURRAY.

"This was the card, numbered, sale fruit and berry crops were rufted. Bob's beans, sweet corn, and the raising them better. And if it's the stamped and self-addressed to "Robert Murray. Superintendent."

This was the card, numbered, the inght, and a thick gray frost covered the landscape.

The cold snap lasted nearly a week, training for a day or two, then freez-ling up tight, breaking the record for many years. Throughout the northern end of the state fruit and berry crops were rufted. Bob's beans, sweet corn, and the card, numbered, state fruit and berry crops of the sadded distinction to your household.

"That there word 'idea' don't sound the capital the capital to have a way of either raising the mechanics of the nariers and delivered by the Quality and the capital to he northern end of the state fruit and berry crops of the harder of the landscape.

The cold snap lasted ne

OR a week the Murray rural mail grew. Finally he was ready to be-box was loaded to the galvanized gin garden-truck deliveries. Then "And do it willingly, because they know they're getting more value for their money."

"It ain't solid, economically," declared Good.

"It is—absolutely," said Bob firmly.

"It is—absolutely," said Bob firmly.

"It makes dad and me successful farmers, an asset to the nation."

"You're aiming to boost the price of the thing people have got to have to live."

"You've got to have clothes to live. You've got to pay for quality in clothes."

"What if every farmer did it?"

"What if every farmer did it?"

"It ain't solid, economically," defict aim to come back. Out of the saveral dozen finally received but two several dozen finally received but two families who seldom bought beans, cabbages, onlons, rhubarb, horse-radish, turnips, carrots, radishes, cutoumbers, squash, kohlrabi and few you've got to pay for quality in Bob looked him up in the telephone book, finding his name from the number of the carrier. Before the daded.

"He got out the car, drove to Three Walleys and caught the 1 o'clock trollew. His customers, with little exception, were the smarter folk of the city, families who seldom bought beans, cabbages, onlons, rhubarb, horse-radish, turnips, carrots, radishes, cutoumbers, squash, kohlrabi and few you've got to pay for quality in Bob looked him up in the telephone book, finding his name from the number, artichoke, parsley, plant, endive, partichoke, parsley, plant, endive, partichoke, pa tables Bob's father had never raised

> plant.
> It was a bitter set-back. But he wore his mother to silence, and instill sat patiently day after day in his darkened room. For weeks fol-lowing the close of the season, Bob put off balancing the farm accounts. But the job had to be done, and he buckled down to it at last.

* * * * had dreaded. The chickens and bedroom and received minute instruc-tions regarding each vegetable—the exact date for planting, the number of seeds to a bed, the distance seeds and plants should be placed apart in

You're not going to find twenty-two hundred dollars growing on trees." "I'll get it," said Bob, fighting for When he returned from the barn northwest wind bearing down through the orchard. By 10 o'clock the thermometer had fallen to 40 degrees. He went to bed uneasily, yet not wishing to alarm his father by asking him what, if anything, might be done. He awoke the next morning with the realization that he will be the squire of th

"You can't see him," darkly.
"I have a legal right to present these notes "You can consider them presented," said the boy, swinging open the out-

side door. The squire's trim face flushed with anger. 'And you, young whippersnapner. can consider the fact that tomorrow morning at 9 o'clock I will be in court entering these notes and issu-ing an execution for the sheriff!" Sick at heart, he tried to cheer his when the visitor had gone. Bob's mother and keep the knowledge of mother cried bitterly on her son's "It's no use, Robbie, George Good

was the only man who would ever give us two thousand dollars. We're no us two thousand dollars. We're no good, I guess. They'll sell Harry and Bess and the cows out of the barn. They'll sell your father's chair under him, like they did the bed under Ellis Reeser."
"They won't!" said the boy, his face swollen with emotion. "I'm going to Pennyer, now," he added.

He got out the car, drove to Three

"I'm not asking you to drop everything," said Bob earnestly. "But I
have to have the money by 9 oclock tomorrow morning, or I'm wiped out."
"Impossible! Er—in fact, to be per-I a month. "Impossible! Er—in fact, to be per-fectly candid, I hardly think from your description that we shall find the farm successful enough to favor it at all." successful enough to favor it at all."
"If it was successful, I wouldn't need you at all." protested the boy. "I always thought it was a banker's business, sir, to finance a promising business and encourage and develop it to where it will be a big customer for the bank."

The cashler rose stiffly. "If you would know your business, young man, as well as we are acquainted with ours, it might not be necessary for you to come begging us for a loan. Good afternoon."

Murray," said the secretary. "He is anxious to see you personally. He didn't confide the reason, but I trust it is all right. He used to be in my department. A very able young man."

The head of the Grainger Company planced at Rob keeply registering the residence of the registering the registering that will probably take in the Yale-Harvard game next yr, and a brothen in Hartford witch is only a step from New Haven, you might say, and he is all ready planing to take in the Yale-Princeton flasco, so I can't think of nothing that would tickle them

glanced at Bob keenly, registering just a flicker of surprise at the boy's farm attire. "Glad to see you, my lad. What can Bob plunged straight into his mission. "I want you for a partner in our farm, Mr. Grainger. You furnish the idea—I do the work."

idea—I do the work."

The eminent shoe manufacturer seemed slightly taken aback. "My dear boy, you've come to the wrong party. I'm afraid I couldn't furnish party. I'm afraid I couldn't furnish an idea for a farm."
"You've already furnished it," in-" The older man looked mildly When I was in college," explained

the boy, "a fellow in my class had a pair of shoes I liked. They always made him look distinctive. I asked made him look distinctive. I asked where he got them. He said they were Grainger shoes. I went to a store and found Grainger shoes cost a dollar and a half to three dollars more a pair than shoes without any particular name, like those I had bought before. A dollar and a half was a lot of money to me, but I bought the Grainger shoes. They gave me twice as much wear and pride as the ones I had bought before. That's why I applied first to the Grainger Company for a

His hearer glanced up at him with a shade more of quiet interest.

"This is the idea you've given me for our farm," went on Bob. "Most farmers today are selling their products like those shoes I used to buywithout any particular name. Why can't a farmer build up the reputation can't a farmer build up the reputation of his goods like any other manufacturer, and sell them at the cost of quality plus a fair profit? In other words, if Grainger's highest quality shoes in the world have made a tenmillion-dollar success right here in Pennyer why can't Grainger & Mur-Pennver, why can't Grainger & Mur-ray's highest-quality farm in the county make a ten-thousand-dollar

"Sit down and tell me about it," in-"Sit down and tell me about it," in-vited the manufacturer. Bob sat down and told his story. When he had finished he leaned for-ward simply. "It isn't so much what I'll lose if you can't see your way clear to come in with us. I can start at something else. It's that my mother loses her homestead and my father his last chance to prove to his neigh-

outfit in the stores," suggested the secretary, "glancing at his watch. "I'll advance you the money if you need it. Later you can phone your mother to pack a bag and send it in. Saturday afternoon you can go home for the week-end and make what ar-rangements are necessary."

"But—"
"Better stay, Murray," advised the secretary, quietly. "A job today is better than none tomorrow." Bob realized that his former chief spoke wisely. Soberly he accepted to position and left for the shop of his

of the production department. It was rather a minor position, and required the mother.

whether its salary was more than \$60 a month.

As he took up his new duties next morning his spirits had never been lower. Mechanically he made his way about the factory, from floor to floor, from one foreman's desk to another, within him against the millionaire specially in the sun, or when there's morning his to her kinding of the said." continued the father, monplace position like this. The failure of Quality Farm refused to a specially in the sun, or when there's within him against the millionaire specially in the sun, or when there's morning his man like you in the business. He said not her failure of Quality Farm refused to a said the mother, excitedly. The failure of Quality Farm refused to the said," continued the father, and in my desk is 4 pieces out of a box I will be said." continued the father, and in my desk is 4 pieces out of a box I will be said." continued the father, and him when you told him your story he knew he needed a young man like you in the business. He said to their little mush like candy? And in my desk is 4 pieces out of a box I will be said." continued the father, and the father and success in a nutshell, and have done the world that brings the world that br

Both boy and girl swept his farmer citothes casually.

"He is busy," droned the girl.
"What do you wish to see him about?"
"A private matter," said Bob, short-ly what do you wish to see him about?"
"A private matter," said Bob, short-ly what do you wish to see him about?"
"A private matter," said Bob, short-ly whether he will receive Mr. Robert Murray, business personal."

Lardner Takes Up Question
Of the Christmas Shopping



"WHILE I WAS GOING THROUGH MY DESK TO LOOK FOR A RAT THAT HADN'T SHOWED UP FOR SEVERAL MEALS, I COME ACROSS MANY ANOTHER ARTICLE."

"Good. You're to start first thing in the morning."

"I'm afraid that lets me out," said Bob. "I couldn't—"

"Stay at my house overnight. Mrs. Jones will be glad to have you."

"Thank you very much," hastened the other. "I appreciate it, Mr. Jones, but I've got to get home and tell the folks how I made out. Besides, I haven't any decent clothes along."

"You'll still have time to buy an outfit in the stores," suggested the secretary. "glancing at his watch.

"Your father wants to tell you about

ley. Not until he entered the car was hand clouded his mother not to work of his mother to his his hat a black for though he had been unable to save the farm, he had secured a good position in town and would be back Sat and his mother to the first to him town and would be back Sat and his mother to him town and would be back Sat and his mother to him town and would be back Sat and his mother to him town and would be back Sat and his mother to he had also the work now some of the boys who worked here. To his chagrin these latter hailed his account. He had also the work now some of the boys who worked here. To his chagrin these latter hailed his appearance in overalls with visible the country.

HAAT night Mr. Jones explained his now now him he would try to find a house in the suburbs, which would seem more like work of the son, bewildered.

We're partners," explained his nor had had a long talk in here."

The dearried his account. He had also the would try to find a house in the suburbs, which would seem more like would not he would not he would not he would not he had so we had carried his account. He had also the would not he had to him in to work outside if he wants to

"No chance?" asked Bob, feeling suddenly worn out.

The other reluctantly shook his head Bob got to his feet, trying to smile. He had played his last card, and lost. His father had lost with him. So had Quality Farm. Squire Meek had won, along with the neighbors who had predicted failure.

"Tm sorry, Murray," said the secretary again, kindly. "Can I help you to a position somewhere?"

"I—I suppose I'll have to be getting something," Bob confessed. "Mother and Dad will be living with me now—"

"There's a job open here." mentioned the other. "Mr. Grainger said I should offer it to you, Don't know as you'll care for it, though. It's subordinate work."

"I'll be glad of anything," said Bob, simply.

"Good. You're to start first thing in the morning."

"That is how the idear come to me to me was the same scheme will no doubt morning."

"That is how the idear come to me of them was the programme in his pocket he can give the usher the horse laugh simply.

"That is how the idear come to me of the many and the same scheme will no doubt the same scheme will no doubt all of them has got a no nowel here."

"The strain the played has late a nickle earn than liveling in the subtration has and the little than the table and even if he has got one with and the suburbal and the little than the to have have have have have have ha down in Indiana and often goes up to old Chi to get the air and sometimes when he wants to stay over night, why maybe the people that would put him up has all ready got too darn much Co. and half to send him to a hotel. Well I am going to mail this bird the key to Room 1014 at a hotel in Chi and then he can jump right in the elevator and go to his rm. Without monking around no fresh clerk's

out monking around no fresh clerk's desk or tipping a bell boy to carry his other collar and night gown. "Your father wants to tell you about it," she answered tenderly, and led the way upstairs like a girl of sixteen. Dumfounded, he followed.
"Bob," greeted his father, his voice unsteady with feeling as he rose blindly above his chair, "mother and I just realize what a good son God gave us. When Mr. Grainger was here—"

The quick question caused the official to stiffen. "At our convenience," he replied testily. "A big institution cannot drop everything and run to look into a small, doubtful rural enterprise on which it is asked to make a loan."

The quick question caused the official little ability except accuracy. Its former incumbents, according to Bob's memory, were young chaps just out of high school. He doubted whether its salary was more than \$60 whether its sa

"One of these modern girls," he "One of these modern gifls," he said, "was praising a new play.

"But," said a young man, coughing but isn't it rather—er—rather ultra?

"Ultra? Not a bit," said the modern girl, as she fixed a cigarette in her long amber tube. 'It's a play that any girl could take her mother to.'